

MEMORIAL
OF THE
Blessed Sacrament

Preach'd in the Chappel of

HIS EXCELLENCY
THE
SPANISH EMBASSADOR

On Corpus Christi Day, June 7. 1686.

By R. F. JAMES BLAKE, of the Society
of JESUITS.

PERMISSU SUPERIORUM

LONDON.

Printed by Henry Bate, Printer to the Library
of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.



(1)

S E R M O N

Of the

BLESSED SACRAMENT,


Preach'd in the Chappel of His Excellency

The SPANISH Embassador,

On Corpus Christi Day, June 3. 1686.

Caro mea vere est cibus, & sanguis meus
vere est potus. *Joan. c. 6. v. 56.*

*My Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is
Drink indeed.*

 HE Omnipotent Hand of
God, ever in his Gifts more
liberal to Man than to any
of his other Creatures, en-
rich'd him with his own
Likeness, in that Great and Noblest Part
of him, his Intellectual Power; which is

A 2

fo

JUN 29 1928

W. H. R. H.

so active and capacious, that the very Author of Nature, and Cause of Causes, becomes the Subject of its Apprehension, and a proportionable Object to its Discourse : For, needing no other Guide than its own natural Conduct, by evident Demonstrations it mounts so high, and Eagle-like contemplates so long with admiration the Radiant Splendour of the Divine Sun, that at length, with great clearness, it descries the Indefectible Being, and vast Immenfity of this not-caus'd Cause, and unmov'd Mover of all things.

This is a great Perfection indeed ; but it is not without its Imperfections : for it is a Limited, a Created one, subject to Error, and liable to Mistake ; especially when relying on its own Power, it will out-reason it self, in passing those Bounds and Limits of Natural Truths, which God hath fet it, and foolishly pretend to reach with Reason things that are seated above the reach of Reason, high and supernatural Myfteries ; or, when it perceives the impossibility of such an Attempt, temerarioufly deny whatever falls not within the Verge of Reason ; than which nothing
can

can be more unreasonable, nothing more contrary to Reason.

For if Reason doth (as certainly it doth) demonstrate God to be infinitely Wise, infinitely Powerful, and infinitely True, on the one side; and us, on the other, to be only of a Finite and Limited Understanding; it follows, by evident Consequence, That God knows some things, which far exceed the Natural Capacity of our Understanding; otherwise he would not be Infinite in Wisdom, as he would not be Infinite in Power, or Omnipotent, if he could do nothing that surpass'd our Natural and Finite Forces; nor would his Veracity be of Infinite Authority, as Reason evidences it is, if his Word were to be question'd by us, or he could not make it good.

God being then essentially endow'd with an Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Authority, whatever he reveals, be it never so much mounted above the Sphere of Reason (for repugnant thereunto it cannot be) there is an Obligation incumbent on us of giving our Assent and Belief unto it, when by such as God hath sent, and deputed to publish it in his Name, it is made known unto

unto us. For, provided these Men prove, with evident Signs of Credibility, such as no Man in Prudence can doubt of, their Mission and Deputation from God unto us, as all that are sent from him for the Conversion of Nations unto his Holy Faith, have done, and still do, Reason will not be able to furnish us with any plausible Excuse, but rather, on the contrary, will condemn us as Imprudent, if we deny our Assent to any Truth, which is thus propos'd unto us by the Light of Faith, forasmuch as it appears with far more credibility, than can be found in any Argument of Reason, or even of Sense it self, which is opposite thereunto.

Aug. de verb.
Apost. Serm.
27.

On this Reason is grounded that excellent Saying of the Great St. Austin, *Intelligam, inquis, ut credam, crede, inquam ut intelligas: I will understand, thou sayst, that I may believe; but I say, Believe, that thou mayst understand: For Reason may carry before it a specious shew of true Evidence, and yet mistake, and so lead us from our Faith. Sense likewise do's often err, and mistake one thing for another, thinking it to be, what really it is not. Shall we then*

then from such feeble and fallible Principles derive our Faith? No, no; *Nisi credideritis non intelligetis*, Unless you will believe, says the Prophet *Esay* in his seventh Chapter, according to the *Septuagint*, you will not understand. There is no securer Argument of Knowledge, than what leans on Faith, and draws its Origine from its Principles, which are incomparably stronger and higher than any natural Principle of Sense or Reason, and by consequence to be prefer'd before both.

An admirable Advice to this intent is given us by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the *Romans*, c. 12. v. 3. *Non plus sapere quam oportet sapere, sed sapere ad sobrietatem*; That we are not to pretend to know more than we ought to know, but to know to sobriety: That is, We ought not to pretend to know those things that exceed the bounds of our Knowledge, as do many of our Divine Mysteries; but rather, with the same Apostle, we ought to extol and admire the depth of God's Wisdom and Knowledge in all his Works, as things far above our Conception. *O altitudo divitiarum Sapientiae & Scientiae Dei! quam incomprehensibilia*

16. c. 7. v. 9.

Ad Rom. c.
12. v. 3.

Ad Rom. c.
11. v. 33.

abilia sunt ejus Judicia, & investigabiles Viae ejus! O the height of the riches of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are his Judgments, and how unsearchable his Ways! Who is able to find out the inscrutable Ways, and sound the fathomless Judgments of our Great Maker, in all his mysterious Works of our Faith? Natural Sciences avail us little to the knowledge of these Truths. And for this Reason it was, that *Christ* our Redeemer, who could have chosen for his Disciples, and Preachers of his Gospel, the Learnedst of *Athens*, and even the most Knowing Men of the whole World, chose instead of them a company of poor and ignorant Fishermen, who would not learn to believe, but believe to learn, and confound, with what they learned by belief, the swelling Wisdom of the World, and the Pride of Nature's Doctors.

The Imprudent *Capharnaïtes* startled at this Saying of their Master; *Panis, quem ego dabo, caro mea est pro mundi vita, v. 52. The Bread, which I shall give, is my Flesh for the life of the world;* and knew not in what sense to take it, whether in a real or metaphorical

metaphorical one; but *Christ* willing to free them from this doubt, and to certify them of the truth, subjoyn'd, *Nisi manducaveritis carnem filii hominis, & biberitis ejus sanguinem, non habebitis vitam in vobis*, v. 54. Unless you shall eat the flesh of the son of man, and shall drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. *Caro enim mea vere est cibus, & sanguis meus vere est potus*. For (behold the causal) my flesh is truly (that is really, and not metaphorically) Meat; and my blood truly (that is really, and not metaphorically) Drink. But they incens'd at what he had said, and deeming it impossible, cry out, saying, *Quomodo potest hic nobis carnem suam dare ad manducandum*, v. 53. How can this man give us his flesh to eat, and oblige us to drink his blood? *Durus est sermo hic, & quis potest eum audire?* v. 61. This saying is hard, and who can bear and believe it? And saying this they leave him; *Abierunt retro*, v. 66.

It is an indiscreet way of proceeding in mysterious Matters of Faith, to consider only the *How* of what is said, and not the *Who* it is that said it; *Quomodo potest hic*. For the difficulty of the *How* can this be, that he should give us his flesh to eat, that

- same which was to be given on the Cross for the Redemption and life of the World, would not have made them fluctuate and waver, had they but consider'd also the *Who*, as well the *Hic* as the *Quomodo*: *Quomodo potest hic*, How can He? Who is this He? I'll tell you who this Man, this He is: It is He who can make a Camel pass through the Eye of a Needle. It is He that, if he speak but the word, as the Devil himself acknowledg'd when he tempted him in the Desert, can turn and transubstantiate Stones into Bread. It is the same He that turn'd Water into Wine at the Marriage in *Cana of Galilee*. It is He that came forth of his Monument by Penetration, the Stone being not yet roul'd away; And that came and stood in the midst of his Disciples, *Clausis januis*; *All the Doors of the Room wherein they were, being shut*. It is He that with his Omnipotent Word made all things of nothing. *Ipsè dixit, & facta sunt*; *He said, and they were made*. It is He that has a clear and perfect knowledge of whatever he teaches, and cannot deviate from the Truth:
- Matt. 19. 348.
- Matth. 4.
- John 2.
- Matth. 28.
- John 20. v. 26.
- Psal. 148. v. 5.
- John 3. 11.
- Quod scimus loquimur, & quod vidimus testamur*; *We know what we speak, and what we see*

see, we testifie. It is He in whom are deposited and hidden all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge; *In eo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae, & scientiae absconditi.* In a word, it is He who is the Wisdom of the Father, that came from Heaven upon Earth to teach us Mortals a fruitful Knowledge of God, and of the Mysteries of Faith, making us thereby wise. *Factus est nobis sapientia a Deo*; He is made unto us (says the Apostle) wisdom from God; because he teaches us our Belief, and our Belief Wisdom. This is that He, that Man, who says that his Flesh is truly Meat; *Caro mea vere est cibus.* One who is as Powerful as he is Wise, and both infinitely. And is his word then hard, and cannot you hear him? No more with this *Quomodo potest hic?* this *How can he?* for an *How* in matter of Faith is as pernicious and dangerous, (witness the Apostacy of these *Capharnaïtes*) as is a *Why* in matter of Precept, the one being as injurious to the Authority of *Speaking*, as the other is to that of *Commanding*.

When the Mother of God received the happy Embassy of her Son's Incarnation from the Archangel St. *Gabriel*, *Ecce con-*

- LUC. 1. 31. *cipies in utero, et paries filium, Luc. 1. 31. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bear a Son.* The *How* and difficulty of so great and strange Saying rose in her mind, *Quomodo fiet istud*, knowing that it could not be done by natural means, *Quoniam virum non cognosco*, v. 34. But this *Quomodo*, this *How*, did soon vanish away, when the Archangel told her the *Who* by whom it was to be done; *Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te, et virtus Altissimi obumbrabit tibi; The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the virtue of the most High shall overshadow thee.* Enough, if it be to be done by the Virtue of the most High, by a supernatural Power; the difficulty of the *Quomodo*, the *How*, is at an end, and the most Holy Virgin in humble obedience unto the words of St. Gabriel resists no longer, but gives her consent, *Ecce ancilla Domini fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*, v. 38. Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word. Great things indeed are these, but the Lord who is powerful, and whose Name is Holy, has done them to me; *Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est, sanctum nomen ejus*, v. 49. No longer then with this word
- Quomodo,*

(II)

Quomodo, with this *How* ; tho' the Mystery be above my reach, Supernatural and Divine, I believe it for the holy word of Him who hath said it, and is able to make it good.

No wonder then that these *Capharnaites* left our Saviour, for it would have been an inconsequent way of Proceeding in them, to have admitted the Incarnation of Christ, and to have rejected the Real Presence of his Body and Blood in this Mystery, since Difficulties in order to Belief are alike in both ; For Christ in his Humanity is as much (if not more) above the Capacity of Humane Understanding, as Christ is in the Sacrament ; and therefore whosoever sticks to believe the Sacrament to be Christ, because it is under the Forms of Bread and Wine, eaten and drunk by Men, gives me just cause to think, that he also stumbles at the very Ground-work and First Principle of Christianity, and sticks to believe that Christ was God, because he was in the Shape of Man, and Crucified.

St. Peter therefore, who was present at this Dispute of the Jews, being always admirable

Ver. 69.

Ver. 70.

mirable in his Belief, was not at all shock'd at the Difficulty of Christ's Words, because, first, they were Words of Eternal Life, and consequently of Truth; *Verba vitæ æternæ habes*, v. 69. *Thou hast the words of eternal life*: And, secondly, they were Words proceeding from the Son of God; *Nos credidimus, & cognovimus, quia tu es Christus Filius Dei*, v. 70. *And we believe, and have known, that thou art Christ the Son of God*. And thus for his firm adhesion unto Christ in his belief of this Sacrament, he produc'd that double Argument of Christ's Veracity or Truth in *speaking*, and Power in *working*; both Divine, and both belonging to him, as he is the Son of God.

And captivating thus all Understandings, according to *St. Paul*, 2 *Corinth. c. 10. v. 6.* to the obedience of Christ, and his Holy Faith, the secret Mysteries of God ought not, says *St. Austin* very discreetly, to create in us a Spirit of Contradiction, to the impugning them, but rather of admiration, rendring us attentive to their Importance and Benefit: *Secretum Dei intentos debet facere, non adversos.*

D. 1. Aug.
tract. 27. in
Joan.

And the Importance of this Holy Sacrament

crament of the Body and Blood of Christ, under the accidental Species of Bread and Wine, instituted by Christ for the Spiritual Nourishment of the Soul, is no less than *an Everlasting Life unto the worthy Receiver of it.* And this shall be the Subject of the Two Parts of my following Discourse; the First whereof shall be, of the Benefit we receive by it; the Second, of the Preparation which is necessary for it. But that Grace may give an Efficacy to my Words, Let us desire the Mother of the Fountain of Grace to obtain it for us, invoking her with the Words of the Archangel, *Ave, Ave Maria, &c.*

Caro mea vere est cibus, &c.

THIS then is the Divine Myſtery of the moſt Holy Sacrament, whoſe Feſtival Celebration doth greatly ſolemnize the preſent Day, piously dedicated by the Church, in the Inſtitution of this Feaſt, as a general Thankſgiving, and the Exprefſion of grateful Minds to our Common Lord and Redeemer, for ſuch an unſpeakable and Divine a Benefit, by which is re-
preſented,

presented, in a continual Memorial, the Victory and Triumph of his Passion and Death.

I. Part. Christ our Redeemer having deliver'd, in the Verse immediately foregoing my Text, this as important, as joyful Proposition, *Qui manducat meam Carnem, & bibit meum sanguinem, habet vitam æternam, v. 55.*

Ver. 55.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath life everlasting; proves it with this true and following Reason, *Caro enim mea vere, &c. For my flesh is truly meat, &c.*

The proper Effect of Meat and Drink is to preserve Life; and consequently it may truly be said to give Life to the Eaters and Drinkers of it: Since therefore the Flesh and Blood of Christ are truly Meat and Drink, this Divine Banquet will give Life to those that worthily eat and drink at it, and a Life that is everlasting, forasmuch as this Body and this Blood are everlasting: Wherefore he immediately subjoins, *Qui manducat meam carnem, et bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet, et ego in eo, v. 57.*

Ver. 57.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. And is it possible that he who abides

abides in *Christ*, should not abide for ever: since he abides in him, who abides for ever in the Eternal Father. Hence plainly appears, that the Food he gives us to eat in this H. Sacrament, cannot be any temporal Food of Bread and Wine, since this is perishable, and cannot therefore produce in its effect, what it has not in it self, *viz.* an everlasting Existence, and a durance of Life without end.

And indeed, that *Christ* should feed us with a Food that causes in us effects far excelling those of other Meats, an endless Life, a Life Eternal, seems but agreeable to Reason: for provident Nature hath coupled together these two things, Generation, and Subministration of Aliments, as *Clement of Alexandria* well observ'd. *Quia* Clem. Alex. l. 3. *Padagog.* c. 6. *quid generavit, ei quod generatur, protinus alimentum præbere consentaneum est; 'Tis but reason, says he, that whatsoever ingenders, should give an immediate sustenance to that which is ingendred. Our Eternal Father hath ingendred us by a new Regeneration, Non ex sanguinibus, neque ex voluntate carnis, Joh. i. v. 13. neque ex voluntate viri, sed ex Deo nati sumus, Joh. i. v. 13. Not of blood, nor of the*

will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but we are born of God. Our Generation therefore and Birth is Celestial and Divine; wherefore he gives unto us his dearly begotten Son, an Aliment proportionable to the Being he gave us, a Meat like unto it, Celestial and Divine; because such as the Generation is, such ought also to be the Aliment and Meat. Will it therefore be enough to give us the terrestrial Manna? Will the Milk and Honey of the Land of Promise be sufficient for our new Being? Will the Quails given to the Jews suffice us? Assuredly no, they will not; for they are all but the Meat of Servants, and we, we are the Sons of God, *Ex Deo nati sumus*: And unto the Sons of God is given another Manna far more admirable, another sort of Milk and Honey far more sweet and delicious, and a Flesh more precious by infinite than Quails; because it is the Flesh of God, that really and truly feeds the Sons of God, *Caro mea vere est cibus*. My Flesh, says our bounteous Lord, is a Meat truly agreeable unto such a Generation; such Sons are highly favour'd, who are fed with the Flesh and Blood of their own Father. *Parentes* (as St. Chrysostom

Joseph ponders very well) *sape alius filios tradunt alendos ; ego autem (inquit Dominus) non ita, sed carnibus meis alo, meipsum vobis appono.* *Chrysost. Hom. 61. ad popul. Antioch.*

Parents send their Children abroad to be Nurs'd and fed by the Milk of others ; but I, says the Lord, deal not so with mine : for I feed them with my own Flesh ; *Carnibus meis alo*, the Meat I set before them is no other than my own self, *Meipsum vobis appono.* Behold, this is the Dinner which he saith he has prepared for his Children ;

Ecce prandium meum paravi, Matt. 22. v. 4. *Matth. 22. v. 4*

And who can come unto this Celestial Banquet, where our Lord is both Pastor and Pasture, but will presently cry out with the Prophet, *Psal. 22. v. 1. Dominus regit me,* *Psal. 22. v. 1.*
& nihil mihi deerit, in loco pascuæ, ibi me collocavit ; Our Lord (as St. Jerom turns it) is my Pastor, and nothing will be wanting unto me ; in a place of pasture he hath placed me ; where he will refresh and feed my Soul with a Bread descending from Heaven, having in it all sweetness and delight, with an admirable and divine Aliment, a Meat on which we live to feed, and feed to live eternally.

What Almighty God created to be a

necessary Aliment, Man has turn'd into delicious Superfluities. Life, 'tis true, cannot be preserv'd without Nourishment, and this ought to be the only end of taking it; but now adays it is sought after rather to regale and pamper, than to preserve life. What hath not Gluttony invented to satisfy its longings? What Fish in the Water, Bird in the Air, Beast in the Field is not become a Prey unto Man's ravenous Appetite? What time is spent in Preparations? How much life in Banquets? The order of things is chang'd, and Reason postpon'd to Appetite. We should not eat but to nourish Life, and it seems that we endeavour to live for no other reason than to eat. We place our Happiness in Dainties, our Pleasure in Feastings, and our Heart on Dishes; being content with nothing but what is costly, toothsome, and delicious. God therefore, to gain the Hearts of Men, endeavours to condescend to their Inclination, and gives them in the Sovereign Sacrament of the Altar a Dish, an Entertainment of the greatest regale, the Bread of Angels, and the Wine of Heaven; that so the Lovers of Delicacies might please their Taste; his
Design

Design being both that they might live to eat this Divine Meat, *Ipse vivet propter me, He shall live by me, v. 57.* and that they might eat so as never to die, *Qui manducat hunc panem, vivet in æternum, v. 58.* He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever. To which purpose St. Ambrose says, in his Fifth Book *De Sacram. cap. 4.* *Non iste panis est qui vadit in corpus, sed ille panis vitæ æternæ, qui animæ substantiam fulcit ;* Other Meats (says the Saint) sustain life for some time, and often by their excess put a period to it ; but this cuts off all Periods, making it Everlasting. He then who is desirous to live for an Eternity, let him eat at the Table of this eternizing Meat, if he be prepar'd for it in such manner as he ought. *Qui manducat, &c. vivet in æternum. Caro mea vere est cibus, &c.*

*Ambros. lib. 5.
de Sacram.
cap. 4.*

Did you never observe the diversity of Holy Writ, in recounting the Life and Death of those first Fathers, who liv'd in the Law of Nature ? It numbers the Years of each one, and then adds, that the Person died, *et mortuus est.* Adam liv'd 930 Years, and died. Seth liv'd 912 Years, and died. Enos liv'd 905, and died. And when the

the Life of *Sem* is related, it do's not say that he died, no *mortuus est* is added to his Life. That it should not relate the Death of *Enoch* and *Elias*, I understand very well, because it tells us, that God translated them to a more happy Abode; but no such thing is said of *Sem*: Why then do's not the Holy Scripture make mention of his Death, as well as of that of his Progenitors? It was, because he did not die, according to St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews, c. 7. v. 3. *Neque initium dierum, neque finem vitæ habens*; Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life. All was in him a shadow of Immortality, since it was without Beginning and Ending. S. Jerome, in his 126. Epistle, teaches, That this *Sem* was *Melchizedech*: If it be so, I understand the Mystery. *Melchizedech* offer'd a Sacrifice of Bread and Wine, which was the liveliest Resemblance of this Sacrament. *Melchizedech Rex Salem proferens panem & vinum (erat Sacerdos Dei Altissimi) benedixit ei*; *Melchizedech* King of Salem brought forth Bread and Wine, (for he was the Priest of the most High God) and he blessed him (i. e. Abraham). Let not then Holy

Ad Heb. 7.

Gen. 14. 18.

Holy Writ mention his Death, because this Bread and Wine doth eternize Life: Let his Progenitors die; but let *Melchizedech* live: for the Type of this Bread of Heaven, and Wine of Glory, renders him Immortal.

See here, Dear Catholick, what God has done for thee, how enticing he is, and how he endeavours to win thy Inclination. Draw near then, come; for in this Celestial Table is put both Life and Nourishment; we have here an enlivening Flesh for our Meat, and the only Begotten Word for the sustaining our Eternal Life. Well then do's *S. Austin* exclaim, *O Sacramentum pietatis! O vinculum Charitatis! qui vult vivere, habet ubi vivat, habet unde vivat, accedat, credat, incorporetur, ut vivifcetur: O Sacrament of Piety! O Bond of Charity!* in which God makes a glorious Ostentation of the Greatness of his Love to Men, putting before them a Dish, that is their Refreshment, that lengthens their Life, that drives away Death. *Whosoever would live* (says the Saint) *he hath wherein to live, he hath whereon to live; let him approach, let him believe, let him be incorporated, that he may be enlivened.* **Ecce**

Aug. tract. 16. in Joan.

Let not the chilness of our Souls produce in us a loathing to this Divine Banquet, and so hinder us from obtaining these eternal Felicities. If we desire to eat that we may live, here we shall find a Meat that lengthens life; *Qui vult vivere, habet, unde vivat.* *Christ* stands inviting us to this

Mat. 26.26. Feast of Heaven, *Accipite et comedite*; Behold the Dinner which I have prepared for you of my own Body, *Hoc est corpus meum*; my own Flesh and Blood, *Caro mea vere est cibus.* Let not then our Appetites draw us after the gross Regales of the World, which as they are not sufficient to conserve Life, so they are wont to hasten Death. But if we eat this enlivening Flesh, this sweet Food, we shall live without danger of ever dying; and if we are incorporated with *Christ*, we shall conserve our selves without the fear of ending. *Accedat, credat, incorporetur, ut vivificetur.*

*S. Aug. ubi
supra.*

He that receives *Christ* in the Sacrament, ought to be incorporated and abide in him; and consequently must not abide in himself, much less in the Creatures of the World: for he gives not to God a Lodging that pleases him, unless he empties himself

himself even of himself; which is the Subject of the Second and Last Part of my Discourse, and of your farther Attention.

The Vicious being a sort of men that 2. Part. have lost all Respect to God and man, it is no wonder they should be more inclin'd to Incivilities than Courtesies; and what greater Incivility can they be guilty of, than to Entertain so great a Guest as God himself, amidst a rabble of worldly Affections, and an unruly multitude of carnal Appetites? Who is there that do's not cleanse his House, and remove whatever is unseemly in it, when he is to receive some Noble Person for his Guest? And is it not more due to God, that a Christian should cleanse his Heart, and empty it of all Indecency, when it is about to Entertain the Divine Majesty; casting out all domineering Passions, that *Christ* alone might have the chief Command and Sovereignty therein? Even man himself is not to abide within himself, that so the little Lodging, (which of it self is too narrow) may become somewhat more capacious. *In me maner*, v. 57. *John 6. 57.*
He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, (says our Saviour) *abideth in me ;*
D there

therefore he abideth not in himself, that is, he casts out of himself all affection unto Pleasures, Delights, and Creatures, which are so imbowel'd, as I may say, in his Soul, as that they become the very Breathings of his Life, and as it were one thing with himself. *In me manet*, He must abide in me, and admit not the Soothings wherewith the World is accusom'd to flatter Sensuality, if he mean to Receive this Sacrament, and by it all the Glory of an everlasting Life.

It was for this Reason that *Elias*, when he was to eat that Bread the Angel brought him, which was a Type of this Bread of Heaven, fled from the Court, that so he might not give place to any Affection that should be less pure than it ought, by being in the midst of the Delights, Ambitions, and Liberties of that vicious Age. The cause of his Flight was not the fear of an angry *Jezabel*, but another more worthy fear, viz. that of those contagious Vices which reigned in that Place from whence he fled. *Utique non mulierem fugiebat* (says St. Ambrose) *Propheta tantus, sed sæculum, fugiebat sæcularem illecebram et conversationis maculosæ contagionem*, It was beneath so great

D. Ambr. l.
de fuga sæ-
cul. c. 6.

great a Prophet to flie from the anger of a Woman, but it was not beneath him, nay it was his Duty, to flie from the contagious Conversations of that Age, which prov'd so fatal a Snare to poor Mortals ; and consequently the Court where these dangerous Conversations were most frequent, was no fit Place for him to receive the Bread of God from the Angels. So he that is to receive this Bread of Angels, God in the Holy Sacrament, ought not to busie himself in the pursuit of sensual Appetites, but discharging his Heart from the Lumber of worldly Affections, and freeing it from all that is earthly, must do what in him lies to render it worthy of the Presence of so Divine a Guest.

Nor must we (Catholics) look upon this Preparation as a thing meerly *ad libitum*, and left to our own discretion, and as that whereunto we are not absolutely oblig'd. On the contrary, we must know that it is most necessary : for God, as he is a jealous lover of the Souls of men, will not permit them to place their Affections on any other Good than himself ; for himself alone will he claim the whole Heart of man, without

leaving the least place of it empty for any thing that is not himself, nor agreeable to his Divine Laws. When therefore cover'd under the Sacramental Veil of Accidents he enters within the Heart of man, he takes a view of the Affections, examines his Desires, and accordingly as he finds the Heart engag'd or disengag'd to the things of the World, he becomes thereunto a Life or Death, a Reward or Punishment, as *S. Paul* assures us.

And was not this the Mystery of keeping together the Tables of the Law, the Rod, and the Manna, in the Ark of the Testament, wherein was nothing else. *In qua urna aurea habens Manna, et virga Aaron, quæ fronduerat, et tabula Testamenti; In which was a golden pot having Manna, and the Rod of Aaron that blossom'd, and the Tables of the Testament.* The Manna is joyn'd with the Laws, and what do's this mean? but that the Ark, the Urn, the Breast, which is to shut within it self the Divine Manna, ought to be very well adjusted to the Laws of God, ought not to give entrance unto the Pleasures of this World, and to Affections that are contrary to God's Law. Nothing is to be kept within the Breast of a Commu-

Communicant, but Manna and the Divine Law; *Christ* receiv'd, and a submission unto his Precepts. His Heart is to be free from all other things; to be a most pure Pot or Urn of Gold, and so empty, even of himself and his Apperites, as that within it is to be found only Manna and Divine Laws. And should it not be so, there is also a Rod within the Urn; and it is a Rod of Justice, to chastize the want of Reverence; a Chastisement so near at hand, that he who eats this Divine Manna without due Respect and Purity of Conscience, cannot escape it. *Qui enim manducat, et bibit indigne, judicium sibi manducat et bibit*, says the Apostle in his 1 Cor. 11. v. 29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself*: For where the Manna is kept, there is also kept the Rod of Justice, to execute the rigours of God's Judgment on the unworthy Communicant.

A certain Soldier saw in his Dream, Bread to come down from Heaven, and to fall in the Tents of the *Madianites*; and telling his Dream unto another Soldier, his Fellow-Soldier told him, that this Bread was the Sword of *Gedeon*, which was to destroy *Madian*;

Jud. 7. 14

Madian ; Non est hoc aliud, nisi gladius Gedeonis, Jud. 7. v. 14. This is nothing else but the Sword of Gedeon. But how comes this to be both Sword and Bread ? How ? This is, what in the Ark was Rod and Manna ; there they were together, here they are one and the same thing : for the same which is Bread, is also a Sword ; it is Bread beneficial to the *Jews* ; it is a Sword that kills the *Madianites* their Enemies. *Nec quemquam*

S. Bern. Serm.
5. in Assump.
B. V.

moveat (says St. Bernard) *quod idem verbum dixerim esse et cibum, et gladium, quasi impossibile et absurdum.* Let no man look upon it as impossible or absurd, that the same should be both Bread and Sword ; that the same which is Bread in this Divine Table, should be also a Sword ; Bread which sustains, and a Sword that cuts ; Bread which gives Life, and Sword which gives Death ; *Mors est malis, vita bonis*, as the Church reads to us to day. If thou comest with Purity of Conscience, thou wilt find it the Bread of Heaven, an Aliment of an Eternal Life and Glory ; but if in Sin, and whilst thou art an Enemy of God, thou dardest sit down at this Feast, thou runnest thy self upon the Point of a Sword. *Idem verbum dixerim et cibum et gladium.* And

And was it not this which was exempli-
 fied to his eternal woe, in that treacherous
 Disciple *Judas*? *Christ* celebrated his last Sup-
 per, and gave himself first unto himself, then
 unto his Disciples, under the Veil of Bread
 and Wine. *Ipse conviva, et convivium, ipse* Jerom. in Ep.
ad Hedib.
q. 2.
comedens, et qui comeditur (says St. Jerom);
He himself was both Guest and Banquet; be
both the Eater, and he who was eaten: He
 therefore entred also into the Breast of *Ju-*
das, which was harder then a Stone, since it
 was not softned with the Blood of the
 Lamb. Scarce had this unworthy Com-
 municant, being polluted with an avariti-
 ous affection to Money, received this Di-
 vine Morsel, but behold he is punish'd by
 being given up unto Satan; *Post buccellam*
tunc introivit in eum Satanas, St. Joh. 13. Jo. 13. v. 27.
 v. 27. *After the morsel then Satan entred into*
him. What haste, what presumption is this
 of the Devil? Where *Christ* enters to lodge
 himself, do's Satan thus dare to come and
 make his abode? Yes, and the reason is,
 because *Christ* receiv'd, enters to take pos-
 session of that treacherous Heart as his
 own; but Satan unwilling to lose his right
 to it, hastens to contend with *Christ* for it.
 How

D. Ambr.
Serm. 12. in
Psal. 118.

How excellently well St. Ambrose expresseth it in his Twelfth Sermon upon Psal. 118.

Venit, et intravit in eum Satanas, et capit dicere, non est tuus, Jesu, sed meus; denique quæ mea sunt cogitat, quæ mea sunt in pectore voluit: a te panem accepit, a me pecuniam. Satan came and entred into him, and began to say, He is not thine, O Jesus, but mine; finally, his whole thoughts are taken up in my Concerns, his Heart thinks on nothing else; thou gavest him the Bread of Heaven, but I have given him Money. Which is as much as to say, You, O Lord, are Master of him who receives you in the Sacrament, but he must then receive you with such a Disposition as he ought: for he that still remains a Slave to his own Affections and Appetites, as Judas did to the love of Money, cannot have Christ for Master, nor live under so sweet a Dominion, and so abides not in Christ, but in himself, and in his own terrene Affections, which deliver him into the hands of Satan; Post buccellam tunc introivit in eum Satanas.

But let us advance yet a little farther touching this Disposition, which is of so great importance to the worthy Communicant;

meant ; and with this I end. I say then, that this Bread of Angels may enter with profit into the worthy Receiver, it is not enough to be pure and clean from all mortal sin, but there is yet requir'd a greater Purity of Soul ; not only our Actions, but all our Affections must be pure. This is that which the highest Purity and Majesty of the Guest requires : for if it was meet and decent that the Mother who was to Conceive him, should shine with so great a Purity, as that a greater under God himself could not be imagin'd ; the same Purity becomes thee also who receives the same God. It was a notable Ponderation that of *Tertullian*, concerning the Purity of St. *John Baptist* ; *Quis corpus Domini dignius initiaret, quam ejusmodi caro, qualis concepit, & peperit ; Who could be more worthy to baptize the Body of Christ, than that most pure and Angelical Flesh, which was such a one as that which conceived and brought him into this World ?* As if he thought, that the Purity of the Baptist was as great as the Purity of the Mother of God. It is certain they were not equal in Purity, but it seem'd to this great Doctor, that he who was to come so near, as to touch with

*Tertul. de
Monog. c. 8.*

his Hands that most pure Body of the Son of God, ought to stand in competition for Purity with the very Mother of all Purity her self. And after the same manner I say also, that the Catholic Christian, who comes so near as to touch with his Mouth the most pure Body of the Son of God, and this not once, as St. *John* did, but as often as he receives the Holy Communion, ought as much as in him lies, to procure a Purity like to that of the Blessed Virgin who Conceive'd and brought him forth.

Apoc. 2. 7. *Vincenti dabo edere de ligno vitæ, quod est in Paradiso, Apoc. 2. v. 7. To him that overcomes (saith Christ) I will give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in Paradise.* That is, as *Rich. a S. Laurentio*, in his Twelfth Book of the Praises of the Blessed Virgin has it, *Quod est in Ecclesia militante per præsentiam corporalem in Sacramento Altaris; Which is in the Militant Church, through the corporal Presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar.* To reap then the Benefit of this Mystery, it is necessary that we overcome; viz. that we overcome our selves, that we subdue our Appetites to Reason, and our Reason to God. *Vincenti dabo edere*
re

Rich. a S.
Laur. li. 12.
de Laud. B.
V.

re de ligno vitæ : If you will come worthily to eat of this Tree of Life, so as to live everlastingly, down with Ambition, humble your Pride, away with Self-esteem, mortifie the Desires of Vain-glory, banish Anger and Impatience from your Heart : Let not there reign within your Breast any Faintness of Spirit, any Tepidity in Devotion : In a word, Vanquish your whole self ; be no more your own, but Christ's ; abide in him, since by the Communion of this great Sacrament, thou art one with him. But that this may be done, 'tis necessary, that whatever you are in your self, should die in you, and that only live in you which is God ; and this to such a degree, as that you may be able to say with truth, *Vivo ego, jam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus*, Ad Galat. 2. 20. *I live, now not I ; but Christ liveth in me* : I am clear now of my self, I have examin'd my Heart, I have cleansed my Affections, I have disincumbred my Soul, thereby to make it a worthy Habitable of my God.

So great a Purity of Mind is due from us, when we go to receive the Divine Majesty within our Breasts, that a greater Purity is not requisite to see him in his Glo-

ry, than to receive him in the Sacrament. This is no Exaggeration (Christians), but a real Truth, and worthy of your serious Consideration. We ought to be as pure and spotless to receive God in the Sacrament, as to see him in Heaven. No Soul that is impure can enter into Heaven; nothing with Imperfection can be admitted into those Seats of Angels; nor ought here any Soul that is impure to approach this Table of Angels; or any thing that is imperfect, presume to feed on this Divine Food.

Mat. 18.v.3. The Disposition which God requires in those, who are to see him Face to Face in Glory, is that of a little Child; *Nisi efficiamini sicut parvuli, non intrabitis in regnum caelorum*, Matth. c. 18. v. 3. *Unless you become like little ones, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, says our Saviour. I will not stop here to ponder the heavenly Qualifications of little Children, but take notice to you, that the Divine Wisdom requires also the Disposition of a little Child, in those that are to eat at her Table. She built her self a House, the Church, adorn'd it with seven Pillars, the holy

holy Sacraments ; *Sapientia edificavit sibi domum, excidit columnas septem, PROV. 9. V. 1. Prov. 9. 1.*

Next she prepared her Table, *proposuit mensam suam, v. 2.* with Bread and Wine, and then sent forth her Servants to invite her Guests, with this Message, *Si quis est parvulus, veniat ad me, v. 4.* If any be a little one, let him come unto me ; and on this Condition let him eat of my Bread, and drink of my Wine. So that you see the same Qualification, the same Disposition is requir'd in those that eat God in the Sacrament, as in those that see him in Heaven. And the reason may be, because man feeding at this Divine Banquet, is transform'd into Divine, and becomes one with God. Hence by the holy Fathers, St. Basil and others, Communicants are call'd *Christiferi, Deiferi, Bearers, and Carriers of Christ and of God* ; but none is more expressly to the purpose then St. John Chrysostom ; *Hic Homil. 45. ut autem non solum per dilectionem, sed reipsa in illam carnem convertamur, per cibum id efficitur, quem nobis largitus est ;* That, says he, not only by love, but also in real deed, we may be converted into the Divine Flesh of Christ, it is done and effected by the Meat of this
Divine

Divine Table, which his bountiful Hand hath bestowed upon us. And certainly hereunto, viz. that we may be worthy of becoming (as it were) Deifi'd persons, it is necessary that we should prepare our selves with all manner of Vertues, not permitting our Minds to be disturb'd by Passion, or taken up with any impure Affection.

Nay, if we consider the Actions of our Saviour, we shall find that he seems to require a greater and more diligent Preparation from us, when we are to receive him in the Sacrament, than when we are to see him in Glory. In the Night of the Supper he wash'd the Feet of all his Disciples, *Cæpit lavare pedes Discipulorum, & extergere linteo*, Joh. c. 13. v. 5. *He began to wash the Feet of the Disciples, and to wipe them with a Towel*; Which was symbolically to wash and cleanse them from all Defects and Imperfections, before they fed on this Divine Sacrament. But nothing of this was done by him to the three of these Disciples whom he took with him to the Mount *Tabor*, there to manifest his Glory to them in his Transfiguration; giving us thereby to understand, that a greater Purity of Mind, if possible,

fible, is to be procur'd by us, to receive him in the Sacrament, than to see him in Glory: Let them wash themselves then in the Night of the Supper, tho' they wash not themselves in the Day of Glory.

And thou (dear Christian) wash off the Spots and Sins of thy Soul, with the cleansing Water of Tears, before thou sittest down at this Divine Banquet; that so feeding on this Bread of Angels, thou thy self may'st become an Angel, void as it were of Body, all spiritual, free from Temptations, clear of Passions: for how little soever the Sin be, it is to be washed off before thou Communicatest; all inordinate Affections, and all vehemency of Passions are to be purged away. Thus *Christ*, when he wash'd the Feet of his Disciples, before the Institution and Communion of the Holy Sacrament, wip'd off the spots of venial sins that adher'd to their Affections, *Nam qui lotus est*; for he that is washed, that is clean from mortal sins, wants yet that the Feet be washed; *Non indiget nisi ut pedes lavet*; to wit, to cleanse his Mind of all vain and light Affections.

Attend to the Dignity whereunto thou art

